ed Castes and Scheduled Tribes in all the groups; and

(d) if not, by when the backlog of vacancies reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. P. SlNGH DEO): (a) to (d) 293 persons were recruited directly and 364 promoted departmentally to Groups 'A', 'B', ,C, and D' posts in the Ministry of Defence during the last thre$_e$ years. 61 out of the directly recruited persons and 49 out of the departmental promote belonged to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

However, efforts continue to be made to make ap the deficiencies in accordance with Government orders on the subject.

Tax concessions to Monopoly Houses

1465. SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASWAN; Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a what is the number of cases involving companies belonging to the monopoly houses which were given tax concessions under sections 80 M.M. 80. N/80-O of the Income Tax Act each year during the period from 1979-80 to 1982-83 and w%at was the total amount of concession granted during the said period to each company, separately; and

(b) whether th$_e$ concession amount was within the prescribed limit or it was increased in special circumstances?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRi S.M. KRISHNA); (a) and (b) The information is not readily available. Its collection from, assessing officers all over India would involve enormous time and labour not commensurate with the results likely to be achieved. However, if the Honourable Member desires information in respect ot any particular company, the same could b$_e$ collected and furnished.

Foreign Tour Operations' Visit to Kashmir

1466. SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of tour opera-i tors from Fance,. olland. Selgium, Switzerland, Denmark and Germany who visited Kashmir the current season; and

(b) how many Indian tourist tour operators visited Kashmir during the current season?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN): (a) The Department of Tourism! invited 43 travel agents from France, Holaad. Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark and Germany to visit Kashmir during September 1983 to June 1984. Besides these many private tour operators'travel agents from abroad visit Kashmir every year but the Department of Tourism does not have record of these private visits.

(b) During June 1984 a Kashmir Promotion^ Seminar was organised jointly by the Department of Tourism. Air India, Indian Airlines and the travel trade in which 12 Indian travel agents|tour operalors participated, A large number of travel agents and tour operators visit Kashmir during the normal course of business. The Central Department of Tourism record of these visits.

Presence of Chinese Experts Soldicis in Pak-occupied Gilgit Baltistan Areas and Across Ladakh Border.

1467. SHRT DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report in the Tribune of the 23rd May, 1984 wherein the presence of Chinese experts, engineers and soldiers in the Pak-occupied areas of Gilgit and Baltistan has been reported;

(b) whether the areas referred to are Killantown, Astore and Gilgit;

(c) whether it has also been-reported that the strength of Chinese soldiers across the Ladakh border has increase and also that additional posts have been established in the Kailash range of Ladakh; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO); (a) Government have seen the press reports but have not confirmed information in this regard.

(b) Astore and Gilgit exist in northern Pak-occupied Kashmir area but the. existence of a place called Killantown is not known.

(c) and (d) Government do not have any reliable information to suggest that *fheiti* has been increased in the Chinese troop strength across the Ladkh border or that additional posts have been established by them in the Kailash rainges.

Permission to foreign Banks to enter into Loaning Business

1468. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether permission has been granted to some foreign banks to enter into business jointly with large business groups; and

fb) what regulations are being formulated by Government to ensure orderly business?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) and'(b) As per the information furnished by Reserve Bank of India no permission has been granted to any foreign banks to undertake or conduct the business of loaning or making commercial advances jointly by Indian business groups.

Purchase of High Grade Virginia tobacco by the tobacco Board

1469. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Tobacco Board has turned down the suggestion of the Government of Andhra Pradesh to purchase high grade viTginia tobocco from the Ihe growers; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY (SHRI NIHAR RANI AN LASKAR); (a) and (b) The suggestion made by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for purchases of 1984 Virginia tobacco crop by Tobacco Board has been looked into. Most of the lobacco wilh the growers has already been disposed by them. It is, therefore, not considered necessary for any Government Agency to intervene im the market.

Aboiition of Sales tax and Octroi on Handlooms

1470. SHRl SHANKER SINH; VAGHELA;
PROF B. RAMACHANDRA RAO;
MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE;

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have recently issued any directive to the State Governments for the abolition of Sales Tax and Octroi on handloom products;

(b) if so, which States have implemented the said directive; and

(c) whether Government propose to abolish Sales Tax on some other items also; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA); (a) Central Government have requested the State Governments to consider abolition of sales-tax and octroi on handloom products.

(b) The States of Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Tripura and the Union Territories of Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Heveli and Lakshadweep Islands have informed that they have already exempted handloom goods from sales-tax and octroi duty. Other State Governments are considering the suggestion made by the Central Government.